



29 December 2005

**SAFETY ALERT:  
Soldier Dies of Apparent Alcohol Abuse**

1. I am deeply saddened by the death of one of our young Soldiers who had just returned from deployment on 23 December. He was found unconscious in his barracks room shortly after lunchtime on Christmas Day. He and several of his battle buddies had celebrated their return to Germany by drinking alcohol on Christmas Eve. Although the case is still under investigation, the Soldier appears to have died from excessive alcohol consumption.
2. Soldiers face unique risks when they return from deployment. An involved chain of command is vital to ensuring that redeploying Soldiers are prepared for these risks and avoid making mistakes that could lead to tragedies. In the Army in Europe, we prepare redeploying personnel for the risks they will face and help them make safe decisions by using the USAREUR Reintegration Model. This model serves as the cornerstone of the support we provide to redeploying personnel.
3. A critical part of the USAREUR Reintegration Model is the planning and execution of the 7 half-day reintegration schedule. Redeploying Soldiers must make a transition from the "24/7" pace of an Army at war back to normal operations. The 7 half-day schedule is a deliberate, leader-supervised transition period for all redeployed personnel, including leaders. During this time, training is provided on risks, individual needs are assessed, and support is provided to those who need it.
  - **Leaders:** I ask that you examine your unit reintegration procedures. Ensure that the consequences of risky behavior are being discussed with Soldiers as they return. All leaders, particularly first-line supervisors, must monitor Soldier reintegration. Some Soldiers struggle with the transition from the combat zone and need a support network to help them reintegrate and avoid making mistakes. Talk with your Soldiers and ask tough questions to target the difficulties and concerns they may have.
  - **Redeploying Soldiers:** You are our first line of defense and our Army's most precious asset. The unique skills and experience you have gained in combat are invaluable to our Army. I ask you to continue watching out for yourself and your battle buddy back home as you did in combat. If you are having problems with making the transition back to normal activities, ask for help. I firmly believe that requesting help is not only the right thing to do, but a sign of strength.
4. As we begin a new year, I ask each of you to help me eliminate tragic losses. *No Loss of Life* is our goal. We need every Soldier fully reintegrated, retrained, and ready to continue the fight in the Global War on Terrorism.

DAVID D. McKIERNAN  
General, USA  
Commanding

**McKIERNAN SENDS #2-06**